



Learning on the land in the age of broadband technology

BEEF producers in Queensland are trialling an e-learning training initiative that will deliver online programs in environmental, land and stock management to their doorsteps...or paddocks.

With about 17,000 beef producers in Queensland, the traditional mode of face-to-face workshops delivered by several accredited trainers requires participants to travel significant distances.

This can be inconvenient and costly, particularly given the vastness of outback Queensland. Some producers also have to wait many months for a workshop to be held in their area.

"The Stocktake Reef e-learning package will provide beef producers from reef catchment areas in north and central Queensland with access to broadband-based training programs," project leader Jane Hamilton, of Queensland's Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation, said.

"The e-learning package delivered on the National Broadband Network will bring training that will help them understand their land condition, develop stocktake pasture monitoring skills and use software tools to assist management decisions around grazing



NEW WAY OF LEARNING: Beef producers across the country will learn more about their industry through e-training workshops using the NBN. Photo: CONTRIBUTED

lands.

"The NBN will deliver rich media training, typically only distributed in the past via CDROM. Using the high-speed capacity and stability of the NBN, department trainers will deliver online workshops for up to 10 beef producers concurrently, where the trainer will be able to see and communicate with each producer in a virtual classroom set-up," Kathy Barakis from GVMedia, the

department's technology partner for this program, said.

"Participants will even learn the quality of their own pasture in real time, by sharing visuals with the clarity and speed that only the NBN can deliver."

The department's FutureBeef program helps commercial beef businesses to become more productive and sustainable through the on-farm adoption of best management practices and technologies.

The FutureBeef team uses a range of engagement modes, including research projects, facilitated producer groups, field days, producer demonstration sites and training workshops.

This exciting expansion into e-learning complements its face-to-face delivery and improves accessibility to information and flexibility of training options for producers.

This project has been made possible through funding from the National VET e-learning Strategy whose NBN e-learning programs provide opportunities to demonstrate the power of broadband to enhance outcomes for learners and promote growth in broadband-based training as the NBN rollout proceeds.